

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **LAND USE**

This chapter provides an inventory of existing land uses, a discussion of historic settlement patterns in Hartwell, an assessment of land use problems and issues, a map and discussion of desirable future land uses, and a set of goals, policies and objectives for achieving desired land use patterns.

#### 9.1. Historic Land Use Patterns.

In 1973, the Georgia Mountains Planning and Development Commission (now Regional Development Center) prepared a "Community Sketch Plan" for Hartwell. This plan includes an inventory of existing land use and a recommended future land use plan. The sketch plan provides substantial insight regarding development within Hartwell during the 1950's, 1960's and early 1970's, relevant portions of which are summarized in this section.

Hartwell was originally laid out in a "grid" pattern with streets running generally north-south and east-west. The sketch plan notes that residential and commercial development occurred immediately surrounding the Hart County Courthouse situated on the central square. As additional development occurred, commercial activity intensified downtown, while residences were constructed primarily along major thoroughfares into the city.

The Hartwell Railroad, which ties into the Southern Railroad system in Bowersville, enters the city from the west, passes through the southern portion of the downtown area and ends at Forest Avenue. The railroad contributed to the development of storage and warehousing facilities in this area.

In the 1950's and 1960's, industries built facilities in virtually all directions out from the central core of Hartwell. Commercial development during those decades expanded outside of the central business district, especially along major thoroughfares. Hartwell also began to develop with outlying shopping centers and some "neighborhood" commercial development. Residential development in the 1950's was focused in the northwestern portion of the city, although by the early 1970's residential growth was occurring in all sections of the city.

The sketch plan notes that in the early 1970's six industries were located in the central business district, including the Temple Gin Company located one block north of the courthouse, and two saw mill

operations north of the central business district between Carolina Street and Chandler Street. These industries were considered nuisances due to noise pollution and diminishment of residential desirability on adjacent sites. These uses are no longer in the downtown area.

By the early 1970's, commercial development was taking place primarily through extension of the central business district westward along Franklin Street and Howell Street. New office buildings, banks, eating establishments and retail stores were constructed in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

Single-family residential uses in the late 1960's and early 1970's were most intense in the northeastern portion of the city. Garden plots in rear yards were common, and several of these remain to this day. Extensive residential development occurred in the late 1960's and early 1970's in the southwest section of Hartwell along U.S. 29 (Athens Street). New subdivisions were being developed in the north part of the city at this time as well. Furthermore, the sketch plan indicates that significant "infill" development (construction of homes on vacant sites in existing residential areas) was also occurring.

During the 1980's and 1990's the city saw a doubling in industrial and commercial land use as the city began to annex land along the U.S.29 south corridor for industry and north for commercial growth. Residential land uses along Franklin Street (also U.S. 29 began to be converted to commercial uses.

**TABLE 9-1  
LAND USE, 1994**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>ACREAGE</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>
Industrial	157	6.6
Commercial	135	5.7
Residential	962	40.0
Public/Institutional	138	5.8
TCU	22	0.9
Agricultural	35	1.5
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	3	0.9
Vacant	939	39.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,383</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Georgia Mountains RDC, 1994.

9.2. Description of Land Use Classifications.

The existing and future land use maps presented in this chapter utilize the minimum land use categories required by local planning standards. However, the plan divides the "residential" category into three classifications. A description of each category follows.

9.2.1. Agriculture/Forestry.

This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), aquaculture, or commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting.

9.2.2. Single-Family Residential, Detached.

This category only includes conventional, site-built, single-family residences on individual lots, as well as accessory buildings, structures and uses on the same lot.

9.2.3. Mobile Home/Mobile Home Park.

This category includes mobile homes and manufactured homes on individual lots as well as such dwellings in mobile home parks.

9.2.4. Multiple-Family Residential.

This classification includes duplexes, triplexes, quadraplexes, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments. Public housing developments in Hartwell are included in this category.

9.2.5. Public/Institutional.

This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses.

Government uses include city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.

9.2.6. Transportation/Communication/Utilities.

This category includes such uses as power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, public transit stations, telephone switching stations, airports, water towers, offices/storage areas of utilities, landfills, and other similar uses.

9.2.7. Commercial.

This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.

9.2.8. Industrial.

This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, auto salvage yards and other similar uses.

9.2.9. Park/Recreation/Conservation.

This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers and similar uses.

9.2.10. Vacant/Undeveloped.

This category is for land not developed for a specific use or land that was developed for a particular use but that has been abandoned for that use. This category includes woodlands or pasture land (not in agricultural crop, livestock or commercial timber production) and undeveloped portions of residential subdivisions and industrial parks.

9.3. Description of Existing Land Use.

This section is intended to complement, but not substitute for, the existing land use map (Attached).

Very little agricultural land use remains in Hartwell. Two tracts are classified as agricultural off of Fairview Avenue in the southeast part of the city. A few other agricultural tracts are located in the western part of the city off of Lakeview Circle north of Howell Street (SR 51/SR 77).

Detached, single-family residential dwellings comprise the predominant land use in Hartwell. Virtually every section of the city contains residential neighborhoods.

Although census statistics for 1990 reveal nearly 100 mobile homes in Hartwell, there are less than two dozen mobile homes existing on individual lots. The remainder of mobile homes are presumed to be located in the large mobile home park northwest of Leard Street in the northwest section of the city.

Multiple-family developments in Hartwell, which are mostly projects of the Hartwell Housing Authority, include primarily duplexes and quadraplexes. These developments all exist in the northern half of Hartwell. A ten-unit townhouse development is located at the southwest corner of Johnson and Chandler Streets.

There are a variety of public and institutional uses in Hartwell. Public uses include the county courthouse, city hall, county sheriff and fire facilities, Hartwell elementary school, the Hart County middle school and high school complex, health department, museum, and the public library. Institutional uses include a hospital, medical center, a few nursing and personal care homes, three cemeteries, and numerous churches.

Properties classified as "transportation/communication/utilities" include public utility offices (electric and telephone) Hart County's recycling center, two water towers, an electric utility substation, and the Hartwell railroad right-of-way.

As mentioned in the section on historic land use patterns, most commercial land uses are concentrated in the city's central core, with commercial activity also being present along Howell Street (SR 51/SR 77) and Franklin Street (U.S. 29). There are a few "neighborhood" commercial uses in the south section of Hartwell along both sides of Jackson Street (SR 172). Several scattered commercial uses are located within the residential section in the northeast part of the city. Newer commercial development (office park) of a suburban character has taken place between Chandler Street (SR 51) and Vickery Street in the northwest section of Hartwell.

Industrial land uses are located along the Hartwell Railroad south and west of the central business district, including Milliken, Monroe Auto Equipment, and Dundee Mills, Inc. Other industrial areas in Hartwell include the North Georgia Armory, the Hartwell Company (Blecraft plant), properties north of Benson Street west of Campbell Street, north of Johnson Street, and south of Opel Street (extreme southern portion of the city).

The only properties shown in the park/recreation/conservation category are the community center on the west side of Richardson Street, and the park/recreation complex located in the far eastern portion of the city.

Undeveloped properties are found in the extreme outlying portions of the city in all directions. The most extensive area of undeveloped land lies east and southeast of Opel Street/Forest Avenue in the south parts of the city.

A significant number of vacant platted lots exist in the older developed portions of the city, as well as in new subdivisions located in the northwest and extreme northern portions of Hartwell.

**TABLE 9-2  
ESTIMATE OF EXISTING LAND USE, 2005**

<b>LAND USE</b>	<b>EXISTING LAND USE</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
Agriculture	37	1.2
Single-Family	1,030	35.9
Mobile Home	35	1.2
Multi-Family	72	2.5
Public/Institutional	264	9.2
TCU	7	0.9
Commercial	292	10.2
Industrial	144	5.1
Parks/Recreation/ Conservation	428	14.9
Vacant	594	20.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,867</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Georgia Mountains RDC, 2005.

#### 9.4. Land Use Problems and Issues.

##### Industrial land uses.

U.S. 29 south of Hartwell has witnessed industrial growth. However, national and international trends and market forces has resulted in the loss of industry in the city and area. Other limitations on industrial development are also the result of antiquated and inadequate space and access along

the existing railroad. Location of industries in the central business district is not desirable.

Commercial land uses.

Commercial development in the "central core" is limited by a lack of parking and lack of building maintenance by some property owners and the city. While the city has a Main Street program, a Downtown Development Authority, and a Historic Preservation Ordinance and Commission, the local officials have not used these programs to their full potential. The city did implement a streetscape project which has had some positive impacts on downtown. Scattered commercial development annexed along major thoroughfares have more than doubled the amount of commercial land use in the city during the past ten years. This development has created commercial strips into the city. New commercial uses should be encouraged to be clustered in certain areas.

Residential land uses.

Residential development in the city has been limited to single family neighborhoods. Land use for manufactured housing and for multi-family development has relatively remained unchanged over the past ten years. The city has had success in promoting single family housing through out the city via market forces and through a housing program for low and moderate income families.

Residential infill and re-development between Forest Avenue and Rome Street has begun to take plan and should expand. New residential development should be channeled onto new local streets rather than being permitted to front on major and minor thoroughfares.

The southwestern neighborhoods are expected to be the location of lower density, higher priced homes, while "infill" development will take place in southeastern neighborhoods.

Park, Recreation and Conservation.

The amount of recreation land use in the city increased from three acres in 1994 to 428 acres in 2005. The change occurred due to the county developing recreation parks within the city limited as well as the development of the Cateechee Golf and Country Club. None of these facilities are operated and managed by the City of Hartwell. The city does not have plans to develop any park

facilities or recreation programs as they are adequately served by Hart County.

9.4.1. Demand of Multiple-Family Residences.

As indicated in the housing element (Chapter 3 of this plan), the need for additional apartments and other multiple-family dwellings appears to be strong. It appears the future land use plan should provide for additional multiple-family residential developments in the city. This would be consistent with Hartwell's overall growth policy. Any proposals to expand multiple-family residential development must give consideration to density issues, availability development must give consideration to density issues, availability of urban services and adequate road access, and compatibility with surrounding land uses (probably single-family).

9.4.2. Vacant Commercial/Industrial Buildings.

In several areas of the city, there exist some buildings and structures previously used for industrial and commercial purposes but which now lie vacant. In some cases such vacant buildings are deteriorating or dilapidated and can contribute to neighborhood blight. It is in the city's best interest that these structures once again be utilized, because longer vacancies could result in further degradation and deterioration of neighborhood conditions. The future land use plan should give careful consideration to the appropriate use (or adaptive reuse) of each of these parcels. A parallel objective of this is that the economic development element supports the inventorying and marketing of such buildings for new commercial and industrial uses, where appropriate.

9.4.3. Non-Conforming Uses.

A similar problem/issue to that of vacant buildings is the existence of non-conforming uses scattered in Hartwell's neighborhoods. Non-conforming uses are those activities, which were existing and legal before the city's zoning ordinance was adopted ("grandfathered"), but which are not permitted in the zoning district in which they are located.

Although abatement of non-conforming uses through amortization is legally questionable, limitations on expansion and other disincentives can be instituted.

9.4.4. Strip Commercial Development.

Further expansion of strip commercial development in a linear fashion along major thoroughfares can result in inefficient land use patterns, traffic congestion and accidents, and poor aesthetics. Careful consideration should

be, and is, given as to where future commercial development should be located.

9.4.5. "Cohesiveness" of CBD.

Hartwell's central business district is presently an attractive business, cultural and civic center for the city. Vacancies downtown have become a problem as with other towns in the region and state due to development of strip commercial developments along transportation corridors into the city. Overall appearance of the downtown varies from block to block and property to property. The CBD is now benefiting from an extensive streetscape improvement project. However, the possibility of changing conditions in the CBD dictates that the comprehensive plan give special emphasis to the continued cohesiveness of downtown, as supported in the economic development element.

9.4.6. Protection of Historic Districts.

Development impacts on Hartwell's historic residences, commercial buildings and districts are discussed in Chapter Six. While Hartwell has the tools and program for recognition and protection of historic resources, it is important that the land use plan, policies and decisions by local officials compliment and support historic preservation, rather than hinder preservation efforts or detract from historic "character."

9.4.7. Landlocked and Undeveloped Platted Rights-of-Ways.

The base map, which has property line data included, indicates that there may be several "landlocked" parcels (no public road frontage) and lots and public rights-of-ways that appear to have been previously platted but never developed. While this may be more of a design issue to be avoided in the future, these landlocked parcels and areas of the city may pose some land use complications with respect to compatibility and accessibility.

9.4.8. Industrial/Residential Land Use Conflicts.

In most areas of the city, existing industrial developments directly abut single-family neighborhoods. It is desirable to provide separation between such "incompatible" uses through installation of natural vegetative buffers and/or utilization of transitional uses (such as institutional developments or multiple-family residential complexes) between industrial and residential developments.

9.4.9. Blighted or Declining Neighborhoods.

As indicated previously, vacant commercial and industrial land uses tend to deteriorate and become a

blighting influence on neighborhoods. Blight is further compounded by the existence of several deteriorating and dilapidated residential structures in neighborhoods. The desirability of certain city neighborhoods can continue to quickly decrease if blighting influences are not corrected with community development and neighborhood improvement programs.

9.4.10. Expansion of Medical Zone.

Medical land uses district have developed between Arthur Street and Gibson Street. Since medical uses tend to cluster around hospitals, and hospitals in turn almost always need to expand facilities, the distinct possibility exists that the medical related land uses will expand onto surrounding properties during the planning horizon.

9.4.11. Low Density/Rural Character.

Residential properties in southern and western Hartwell have a lower density, rural character that distinguishes these areas from other Hartwell neighborhoods. The plan should address whether the character of these areas should be maintained through larger lot sizes and other land development restrictions.

9.4.12. Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

The natural environmental conditions in Hartwell pose few if any limitations on development. However, flood plains and other sensitive areas should be appropriately protected in the plan.

9.5. Description of Future Land Use Plan.

The Future Land Use Map 2025 indicates that lands utilized for agricultural purposes in the existing land use survey will disappear in the future. Transportation/Communication/Utilities uses are projected to change by only two acres over the next twenty years .

Single-family residential housing is anticipated to remain the predominant land use in Hartwell, with an increase of 100 additional acres. Most is infill in the southern and western partsof Hartwell. Single-family housing units are expected to comprise 39.3% of all land uses by 2025.

Considerable land has been allocated for multi-family residential uses. The largest portion of such housing is indicated in the northern portion of Hartwell. Additional locations of multi-family type housing include the areas southeast Hartwell. A large area of such housing is also shown in south Hartwell.

Additional needs for public/institutional lands is well provided for in the Future Land Use Plan 2025. Public and institutional land uses are projected to comprise 9.5% of land uses in the future. This is only a slight increase of eight acres in the next twenty years.

Commercial land uses are indicated in the central core of Hartwell. Expansion of commercial land uses is shown in a linear fashion along Franklin Street, as well as along the northern portion of Athens Street. The commercial node on the east side of Hartwell is also included in the projected increase in commercial land. Much of this area will infill development as vacant land is converted to commercial land uses. Acreage in commercial uses is shown to increase by 77 new acres, to comprise 12.7% of land uses by the year 2025.

In addition to existing industrial land uses, 45 acres of new industrial lands are indicated in the Future Land Use Map 2025. New industrial areas include infill development of a large parcels along the railroad tracks at the western edge of the city and a site south on State Route 172.

No new acres of Park/Recreation/Conservation lands are shown on the Future Land Use Map 2025. The park and recreation facilities and services are provided to Hart County citizens, including Hartwell, by Hart County government.

9.6. Acreage Estimates.

Table 9-2 presents acreage estimates for existing and future land use in Hartwell.

**TABLE 9-3  
ESTIMATES FUTURE LAND USE  
2025  
CITY OF HARTWELL**

<b>LAND USE</b>	<b>FUTURE LAND USE</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
Agriculture	0	0
Single-Family	1,128	39.3
Mobile Home	35	1.2
Multi-Family	109	3.8
Public/Institutional	272	9.5
TCU	9	1.0
Commercial	365	12.7
Industrial	189	6.6
Parks/Recreation/ Conservation	428	14.9
Vacant	331	11.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,867</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Georgia Mountains RDC, 2005.

Areas Likely to be Annexed

Projected land use within the City of Hartwell includes acreage projections within the current city boundaries. However, the minimum planning standards require municipalities to consider future land use designations of areas that could potentially be annexed sometime in the future. The City will most likely annex areas of unincorporated Hart County that are in the city's designated service areas found in the Hart County Service Delivery Strategy. These areas are along the highway corridors that enter and exit the city where infrastructure and services can be extended.

Timing or Sequencing of Infrastructure Improvements

Forecasted population identifies that there is sufficient water supplies for the next ten to fifteen years. Sewer capacity needs are also in good shape. Both systems are serviced through regular maintenance and updates in accordance with long-term plans. When requested, expansion or extension of these services into new areas are based on the long-term plans developed by the city's engineer as well as the Service Delivery Strategy. The expansion of services also includes the provision of natural gas as well.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

As stated in the Natural Resources Element, these areas include the areas that require wetlands and floodplain protection. Unstable soils on steep slopes (over 25%) are scattered throughout the city. Most of the single family residential development is projected to occur on these slopes because they have less of an impact on the land.

Traditional Neighborhood Development

Because of infrastructure most of Traditional Neighborhood Design type development or higher density development will more than likely occur either within or around the City of Hartwell. This type of development will take place on most of the vacant lot located around the town. There is a focused effort in the Rome Street Neighborhood to continue the traditional design as the area is re-developed.

The city should provide some types of incentive (for new development) to encourage garden home type neighborhoods for senior citizens who desire smaller homes on smaller properties close to community goods and services.

Areas of Significant Land Use Transition

The Central Business District through deliberate policies and efforts has the potential to remain as the activity center of the city and the county as well. Without proper attention and management the area will deteriorate and could become a liability to the city.

The Franklin Street corridor will continue to experience changes from residential to commercial land uses. It is anticipated that most of this will be replaced with new commercial facilities with adequate entrances and parking.

#### Areas Proposed For Redevelopment

The Rome Street Neighborhood has a re-development plan in place. The city is moving forward with the implementation of the plan, which includes housing rehabilitation, new infill housing, redeveloped and infill commercial node, sidewalk and stormwater management improvements.

The City has plans to continue its downtown streetscape improvement program by implementing the third phase of its plan. The city is also moving forward with improving parking in downtown by constructing a public parking facility. Also proposed is the redevelopment of the Haley Building property, which will be managed by the DDA.

#### Factors Influencing Growth Patterns

The primary factor that will continue to influence growth patterns in Hartwell the growth that is occurring in Hart County along Lake Hartwell. This type of setting is extremely attractive to the retirement population and is projected to continue through the planning horizon. The development of the interchange along I-85 could have an impact on the growth patterns around Hartwell as well.

#### Local Development Policies

There is a great need for a comprehensive land development and redevelopment program.

Existing regulations that are weak, and vague should be updated and actively enforced. Additional planning, incentives and regulations are needed if the desires to adequately and efficiently address the needs of growth as projected in this plan.